Didymo algae (Didymosphenia geminate)

What Is "Didymo" or "Rock Snot"?

Didymo is a native to North America that historically occurred in cool, low-nutrient waters. Since the mid-1980s, it has expanded its ecological niche to include a wide range of water temperatures and nutrient levels. It now has the possibility of growing well in clean, clear flowing rivers such as the North Fork of the Big Hole River. Didymo is a type of invasive algae that attaches to plants, rocks, and other hard substrates in rivers and streams. Didymo is also called "rock snot" due to its slimy appearance.

Why Is Staff Concerned About This Algae?

Didymo can produce thick mats that cover stream beds and smother aquatic insects—making swimming, fishing, and other water activities undesirable. People, including fishermen, are thought to be the main way that Didymo is being spread from one place to another. Recreational equipment, including clothing, can become contaminated and encourage the spread of Didymo if not cleaned properly before being used in another body of water (Yosemite NP, 2010).







Then forms thick clumps



Mature stage

National park service scientists conduct integrated water quality and stream channel characteristics monitoring protocols that provide a means of detecting these invaders, but the best way to prevent them is for anglers to decontaminate (check, clean, dry) gear before entering park waters.